

Lajee Center's Ninth International Work Camp



YOU'VE READ ABOUT PALESTINE in the press, you've seen images on the news, you know that this is an important area of the world. Now take the opportunity to come and see something of the reality for yourself. Two weeks participating in Lajee Center's International Work Camp will give you a unique opportunity to see Palestinian life from the inside. Live with Palestinians, work with them, talk to them, play with them, sing and dance with them, hear their stories, see their reality.

This is what one volunteer from last year said about the Work Camp: *"Deciding to volunteer at Lajee was the best decision I have ever made. I loved interacting with the children, they are so filled with love and hope that it's overwhelming. I strongly recommend Lajee workcamp to anyone who wants to make a difference and have a ton of fun while doing it."* (Sophia, USA)

Participants will be provided with accommodation and meals in Aida Camp, and will engage in a variety of activities with the local volunteers and children of the Camp. Our program is designed to give you access to a range of people with interesting and diverse stories, offer you a glimpse into many aspects of life in the camp, and provide you with a variety of ways to help out. English will be the language of the Work Camp.

Activities:

- Work - our principal activity this year will be working on the land behind Lajee Center.
- Talks – this is a major part of the programme and includes talks by local people from different aspects of life (politics, social welfare, media, academia) as well as foreign experts.
- Activities with children – football, basketball, games.
- Cultural activities – *dabke* (traditional dance), singing, music.
- Visits – to families in the Camp and to places of interest outside (Bethlehem, Hebron, Abu Dis University).
- Classes – introductory Arabic conversation for those interested, cooking class with the women in Aida Camp.
- Free day – to relax, go to the swimming pool in Bethlehem, visit other places (e.g Dead Sea, Jerusalem, Hebron. We can help with the arrangements).

Aida Refugee Camp is located just 8 kilometers south of Jerusalem and borders the city of Bethlehem. It was established in 1950 by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency following the diaspora of Palestinians after the 1948 Arab-Israeli wars and the creation of the State of Israel. It has a population of approximately 4,500 people, over half of whom are children. The Wall encloses it on two sides.

Lajee Center was set up 10 years ago by a group of local volunteers to provide the children of the Camp with constructive, educational and enjoyable activities to help alleviate the difficult conditions under which they live and to assist in developing their skills, knowledge and talents.

What to bring:

- sleeping bag
- work clothes, including work gloves, scarf, sun hat
- sunscreen
- mosquito repellent
- cameras, notebooks for recording your experiences to share later with friends
- ideas for games with the children

N.B. clothes should be cool, comfortable and respectable. No shorts or tank tops, please (we must respect local dress customs)

Cost: €300.00. This covers accommodation (in the Boys' School in Beit Jala, near Aida Camp), food (excellent and abundant), local transport and trips to places within the West Bank. Volunteers are responsible for funding their own travel to Aida. They will be met in Jerusalem and taken to the Camp.

Number of participants: 30, plus local volunteers

Minimum Age: 18 (no maximum age)

Write to helenp149@yahoo.com for Application Form (also on Web) and further information.

Visit our Web Site: www.lajee.org and read about our previous workcamps.

Keep in mind that flexibility is key, given the unstable situation in Palestine. We will keep you informed about what is happening as well as about any changes to the program.



Aida Refugee Camp

Bethlehem,
Palestine

25 July —
8 August 2010